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RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 000151

SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: MFA SAYS APPROVAL FOR WILLIAMSON VISIT REFERRED TO
PRESIDENCY

Classified By: CDA Alberto Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) The question of whether or not to approve the visit of newly-appointed Special Envoy Ambassador Richard Williamson has been referred to the Presidency, according to MFA Americas Director Ambassador Abdel Al-Sanosi. Al-Sanosi told CDA January 31 that "the feeling here is very negative" about the new Special Envoy. "We have heard that in the past he referred in writing to Sudanese government officials as thugs." Al-Sanosi also complained that the United States did not inform Sudan about Williamson's appointment or consult with the Sudanese government in any formal way before the announcement of the appointment was made.

12. (C) CDA replied that the Embassy has been consumed with internal issues regarding the murders of two of its employees for the last month and therefore had little opportunity to consult on the nomination of Williamson. CDA warned that the GOS should not make a determination at the last minute, and should tell us immediately whether or not it will approve the visit. Al-Sanosi responded that the State Department could have formally notified the Sudanese Embassy in Washington which was not focused on security issues.

13. (C) Comment: We believe the GOS will approve the visit of Special Envoy Williamson because not to do so would carry too many risks for the U.S.-Sudan relationship. Moreover, since the Special Envoy may have already met Foreign Minister Deng Alor in Addis, the NCP-dominated regime would lose face if it publicly refuses to see Williamson when its SPLM Foreign Minister has already met him. It is quite likely, however, that SE Williamson's access may be limited to just a few senior officials, and it would be surprising if he received an appointment with President Al-Bashir, unless there is some sort of breakthrough in Addis Ababa with MFA Alor.
FERNANDEZ